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ABSTRACT

The paper outlines a faculty developed communication skills training lab designed for students in a masters degree program in guidance and counselor education. The communication module, three voluntary, ungraded sessions offered during three of the final six class meetings, focus attention on (1) distinguishing between thinking, feeling, and experiencing; (2) using effective "I" statements; and (3) responding with empathy. Each of these skill areas is described in detail, behavioral objectives are stated, and procedures for class time--including cognitive input, demonstration, practice, and summary--are outlined. These class meetings are designed as training and practice sessions and not as lectures, discussions, or therapy. Results of students' evaluation of the lab are included, as well as behavior check lists and tables comparing independent rater evaluations to students' own self-assessments. (SES)

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COMMUNICATION SKILLS

IN

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELOR EDUCATION

APGA REGIONAL CONVENTION

ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

April 18, 1973

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COMMUNICATION SKILLS TRAINING

I. BACKGROUND OF COMMUNICATION SKILLS LABS

A. Rationale:

The basis of good interpersonal relations is the effective use of communication skills. This is true whether it be in guidance, counseling, teaching, or administration. Unfortunately, many master's degree programs do not provide students with the opportunity to focus specifically on this area in their preparation.

B. History:

Three faculty members at Bradley University were aware of the communication skills needs of students. We prepared a series of laboratory experiences that might teach some basic skills in a reasonably short period of time.

Five semesters ago, we initiated the lab program by involving members of the introductory graduate guidance course in a three-week (9 Hour) encounter group experience for the purpose of focusing on the general area of interpersonal communication. The results of this first experiment were less than desired. Students seemed to have difficulty in coping with multiple facets of the encounter group experience.

It seemed more desirable, then, to focus attention on specific communication skills and to present them, one at a time, in a training model rather than in the group encounter model.

The following semester, we introduced a plan for communication skills training which focused attention on (1) distinguishing between thinking, feeling, and experiencing, (2) using effective "I" statements, and (3) responding with empathy.

II. CURRENT CLASS PROCEDURES

A. Preliminary Procedures:

An overview of the communication skills lab is presented in the opening session of the course. The format is presented briefly so that students will have an opportunity to think about participation before they actually agree to be involved in the experience. Three of the last six meetings are scheduled for communication skills. (The remaining three sessions are micro-counseling labs).

The week before the Communication Skills are scheduled to begin, the "Ground Rules" are distributed and discussed. Students are asked to decide whether or not they will participate in the sessions. Participation is voluntary, and each student makes an individual commitment. If students elect not to take this communication module, they are offered other experiences. There are no grades attached to performances in the sessions. We want students to become actively involved in what we have found to be a meaningful learning experiences, and so we remove the threat of grade evaluation.

Class periods are extended to three hours, from the normal 2½ hour spans. The extra thirty minutes allows more time for practice and feedback.

B. Pre/Post-Testing and Taping:

In order to assess the effectiveness of the communication skills lab, we use two evaluative procedures. Each student completes two self-inventories, the FIRO-F and the Personality Orientation Inventory (POI). They are administered pre and post.

In addition, a five-minute pre-video taping is made in order to establisl a baseline for evaluating an individual's communication behavior.

Following the communication skills lab, a five-minute post-taping is completed.

The pre- and post-tapes are evaluated for behavioral change by the students and by two experienced outside raters.

C. Individual Sessions:

Each communication skill presenter uses the following training format:

1. A brief period of didactic input. The printed handout is distributed for individual study.

2. The skill is demonstrated by the presenter.

3. Students practice the skill, usually in pairs or triads. The practice sessions are videotaped.

4. Through the use of videotape replay, students are given immediate feedback on their performance.

College of Education Dr. Burke

Bradley University

Communication Skills Training Sessions

Purposes

1. To present short lectures (10 minutes), demonstrate, and practice three basic communication skills involved in interpersonal relations: Distinction between thinking, feeling and experiencing; "I" statements, and empathy.

2. To promote greater personal awareness of self and others.

Ground Rules

1. Attendance is voluntary. However, if you elect to attend the series, we request that you attend all three training sessions. If you decide not to attend, an alternate experience will be substituted for the class sessions missed. The second session will be two hours in length. The third hour will be by special arrangement.

2. The class meetings are training and practice sessions, not primarily lectures, discussions, or therapy.

Education 652 Dr. Burke

Communication Skills Laboratory:

1. What did the communication skills experience mean to you, both positively and/or negatively?

2. In what ways could this experience be improved?

3. (a) Should the experience be offered again as a part of Education 652?

   (b) If it should be offered someplace during your gradute study, where or when should it be offered?

   (c) Should participation be optional or required? Why?

   (d) Should the period of involvement be

      1. lengthened to_____

      2. shortened to _____

      3. remain the same_____

4. Additional comments not covered by the above questions.

RESULTS OF STUDENTS' EVALUATION

OF

COMMUNICATION SKILLS LABORATORY

At the end of the three lab periods dealing with Communication Skills, each student was asked to react to the experience and to evaluate the effectiveness of the lab.

A breakdown of questions asked and responses given is as follows:

1. What did the communication skills experience mean to you, both positively and/or negatively?

Thirty-two of the 35 students (91 per cent) who experienced Communication Skills Labs during the past two semesters responded in positive ways to the open-ended questions.

Within this group, 11 respondents suggested that the activities fostered "deeper insight into the ways of communication." Nine students indicated specifically that the labs had been "positive experiences," and five more participants pointed out that they gained "useful techniques" from the experience. Some aspect of having an opportunity to "face one's self" was reported by six students. Five respondents suggested that they were aware of "changed behavior" in their communicating with others.

Four students expressed less positive feelings about their experiences. Two made "no comments" and one student saw the lab as having a "negative correlation to course content."

2. In what ways could this experience be improved?

A number of individual suggestions were recorded. A frequency count suggests that students saw the following modifications as possible improvements:

"More time to practice skills."
"More demonstration of skills."
"More direction" (pre-determining topics)."
"Better definition of skills."

Other suggestions included: "Opportunities to review tapes between sessions." (this opportunity has always been provided), offering the lab "earlier in the semester," and spacing the labs so there would be "more time between the sessions."

3. a. Should the experience be offered again as a part of Education and Guidance 652?

Thirty-one of the 35 students responded "yes." One student said "No," and three did not respond.

3. b. If it should be offered someplace during your graduate study, where or when should it be offered?

Nine students recommended keeping the lab as a part of the same course (Ed. G. 652). Eleven respondents suggested that the lab be in the "initial graduate course" or as "early as possible." Two students indicated that the lab should be at the "end of the graduate program."

Ten students were "not sure when it should be offered" or made no response at all.

3. c. Should participation be optional or required?

Of the 34 students who responded, 16 students recommended "optional" participation, and 16 suggested "required" participation. Two had "no" comments.

3. d. Should the period of involvement be lengthened, shortened, remain the same?

Sixteen students indicated that the experience should be "lengthened." They recommended various spans of time, reanging from "four, five, six, eight, to ten weeks. Another suggestion was for "one-half to one hour a week." A "two semester course" was also suggested.

Seventeen students indicated that the lab schedule should remain the same, that is, three weekly sessions.

One student suggested shortening the number of sessions to "two," and one recommended changing only the length of the sessions, from three hours each to half that time.

COMMUNICATION SKILL TRAINING

BEHAVIOR CHECK LIST

SKILL #1 THINKING, FEELING, EXPERIENCING

NAME_____ Date of Observation_____

	Not at all		Some		To a Great Extent
1. Able to verbally express feelings	/	/	/	/	/
2. Able to verbally report his experiencing	/	/	/	/	/
3. Able to verbally report feelings that are congruent with his observed behavior	/	/	/	/	/
4. Able to verbally report feelings that are congruent with his observed behavior	/	/	/	/	/
5. Able to distinguish between "I feel" and "I think"	/	/	/	/	/

COMMUNICATION SKILL TRAINING

BEHAVIOR CHECK LIST

SKILL #2 "I" STATEMENTS

NAME_____ Date of Observation_____

	Not at All		Some		To a Great Extent
1. Able to use "I" statements containing no threat, demand, judgment, etc.	/	/	/	/	/
2. Able to use "I" statements containing cognitive aspects	/	/	/	/	/
3. Able to use "I" statements reflecting affective aspects	/	/	/	/	/
4. Extent to which he uses a "You" or "We" statement	/	/	/	/	/
5. Extent to which he uses "It" statements	/	/	/	/	/

COMMUNICATION SKILL TRAINING

BEHAVIOR CHECK LIST

SKILL #3 EMPATHY

NAME _____ Date of Observation _____

	Not at All		Some		To a Great Extent
1. Extent that the listener paraphrase verbal content	/	/	/	/	/
2. Extent that paraphrase appears to be accurate	/	/	/	/	/
3. Extent that listener verbally reflects the present affect of the speaker	/	/	/	/	/
4. Extent that listener's reflection of affective aspects appear to be accurate	/	/	/	/	/
5. Extent that speaker indicate (verbally or non-verbally) that he has understood	/	/	/	/	/
6. Extent that the listener appears to care about the speaker	/	/	/	/	/

The data from Table I indicate that students evaluated their Thinking, Feeling, and Experiencing Skills significantly higher ($p < .01$) on the post-assessment than the pre-assessment. However,

TABLE I
THINKING, FEELING, EXPERIENCING EVALUATIONS
Summary Statistics

	Evaluation	N	Mean	S. D.	t	
Self	Pre	23	11.00	2.45		
Self	Post	21	13.57	2.61	3.305	*
Independent Rater	Pre	24	8.46	2.02		
Independent Rater	Post	22	9.36	2.50	1.327	N.S.

* $p < .01$ ($t = 2.423$, $df = 40$, 1-tail test)

the independent rater's evaluations did not show a significantly higher assessment on the post-assessment than the pre-assessment. It is also interesting to note that the independent rater evaluations were much lower than self-assessments.

For evaluations of Empathy Skills, the data in Table II indicate that the independent rater gave significantly higher ($p < .05$) scores on the post-assessment than on the pre-assessment. Self evaluations

TABLE II
EMPATHY - SUMMARY STATISTICS

	Evaluation	N	Mean	S. D.	t	
Self	Pre	23	17.35	4.12		
Self	Post	21	19.14	4.12	1.409	N. S.
Independent Rater	Pre	24	9.92	2.37		
Independent Rater	Post	22	12.27	2.90	2.978	*

* $p < .01$ ($t = 2.423$, $df = 40$, 1-tail test)

were not significantly different on the pre-and post-assessments. Again, the independent rater assigned much lower scores to performances than did individuals rating their own skill.

Comparisons of pre- and post- assessments of performance on the Personal Orientation Inventory (POI) were made. There were signifi-

cantly higher scores (p. 05) on post-test for two scales, Self

TABLE III
POI - SUMMARY STATISTICS

Scale	Evaluation		N	Mean	S. D.	t.	
Sav	Self	Pre	23	20.44	2.70		
Sav	Self	Post	21	21.90	2.22	1.916	*
Sy	Self	Pre	23	6.91	1.28		
Sy	Self	Post	21	7.86	1.24	2.416	*

* $p < .05$ ($t = 1.684$, $df = 40$, 1-tail test)

actualizing Values (SAV) and Synergy (Sy).

SKILL #1

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THINKING AND FEELING

I. Introduction

Often clients have trouble expressing feelings. A man might say, "I feel my wife complains too much." Of course the statement "my wife complains too much" is not a feeling. It is an idea, a thought, or better, a judgment of his wife's behavior. A more accurate statement would be, "I think my wife complains too much." That thought or judgment is based on his experience and feelings.

II. Difference between thinking, feeling and experiencing

A distinction can be made between thinking, feeling, and experiencing. Experiencing refers to sensations and perceptions of bodily stress or process. Certain kinds of experiencing are the physiological counterpart of feeling or emotion. Feelings or emotions are labels for generalized bodily states. Thinking, or the cognitive dimension of awareness, refers to the activity carried on by the intellect.

EXPERIENCING (Physiological reactions)	FEELING (Emotional reactions)	THINKING (Intellectual reactions)
1. Sense Experiences (Exteroceptive-outside skin)	anger	idea
touch	love	principle
smell	guilt	thought
see	resentment	concept
hear	sadness	description
taste	fear	definition
	joy	proposition
	depression	judging
	excitement	teaching
2. Bodily Experiences (Interoceptive-inside skin)	anxiety	interpretation
	frustration	fantasy
	embarrassment	
Result from stimulus of bodily processes or sense experiences	These are labels attached to groupings of simultaneous Bodily Experiences	
pain		
pressure		
temperature		
tension		
shaking		

It may be helpful to look at the man in the example above with this segmentation in mind.

II. Difference between thinking, feeling and experiencing (continued)

The man sees and hears his wife talking to him (SENSE EXPERIENCE). He experiences, at a certain point in time, muscle tensions, increased heart beat, heat in his face and arms, and pain in his neck and shoulders (BODILY EXPERIENCE). He may or may not be aware of feelings: resentment, guilt, anger, anxiety (FEELINGS). He blames (THINKING) his wife for his discomfort and makes a judgment (THINKING) that she complains too much.

III. The value of making the differentiation

The point is this. We basically relate to others through feelings. There is nothing wrong with thoughts; we wouldn't go far without them. In fact, we need both thoughts and feelings to be an integrated person and to communicate authentically.

Yet people often say they can't communicate or that they don't know how the other person feels. What is happening is that more thought is expressed than feeling. They are "all in their head." Thoughts become a way of covering up. The other person is then forced to decode and speculate on what the speaker means.

We react to both outside and inside stimuli. We have feelings or thoughts about things that happen outside of us - words or actions of others or things. We also react to our own neurological or psychological stimuli whether it be fantasy or hunger.

One goal would be to push our patients or clients to explore, own and express their feelings, and to know the difference between a thought and a feeling. To do this we must first be able and willing to do the same ourselves.

IV. Behavioral objectives

To be able to recognize when you and other people are conveying feelings and thoughts. To be able to distinguish between the two in one's own communication and in the communication of others. To be aware of when we are giving or receiving thoughts or feelings. To be able to talk more readily about emotions and feelings.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS TRAINING IN GUIDANCE AND COUNSELOR EDUCATION

PROCEDURE FOR DIFFERENTIATING THINKING, FEELING AND EXPERIENCING

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COGNITIVE INPUT - 20 minutes

Students are led through a common activity and asked to report their experience. Comments are categorized by trainer according to the three-part conceptualization of thinking, feeling and experiencing. The resulting lists are used as a basis for explaining the differentiation. There is discussion and questions are answered.

DEMONSTRATION - 30 minutes

A triad is set up with student-trainees playing the roles of presenter, responder and observer. The presenter is asked to briefly speak on some issue with emotional impact. Some are suggested if this is a difficulty. The responder listens and responds with a report of his experience, thoughts and feelings. The observer gives feedback to the responder. The trainer provides immediate feedback to the responder as well as the others in regard to their role fulfillment. Questions, comments and discussion by class members is invited.

PRACTICE - 90 minutes

The trainees are divided into triads like that in the demonstration. Instructions are the same. As the triads work a video tape-recording is made of various trainees functioning as responder. The trainer also moves about the room giving immediate feedback and aswering questions. After each member of the triad has had an opportunity to be the responder, the large group is reassembled and the video tape is played and processed.

SUMMARY AND CLOSE - 10 minutes

The handout material is distributed, questions are answered, and the various aspects of the training session are summarized, synthesized and related to theory as originally presented.

SKILL #2

Forming Effective "I" Statements

I. Introduction

Meaningful and effective communication between humans is at best a complicated event. Yet, it is possible to break communication down into two fundamental dimensions or factors. Both sender and receiver of messages must possess two basic skills. They are: Sending good "I" statements, and empathy. Empathy (or listening) will be covered in skill #3.

Skill #1 made a distinction between feeling and thinking. We practiced giving feelings and sharing experiences. These kinds of statements provide the basis for "I" statements, our next skill.

II. Description of "I" Statements

A message that is sent from one person to another that conveys a feeling, need, or thought is an "I" statement. The intent is to share verbally what one is personally feeling at the moment of interaction.

The best written statement about "I" statements can be found in Thomas Gordon's book, Parent Effectiveness. According to Gordon the important thing about "I" statements is that the feelings and thoughts are expressed clearly, precisely, and is a manner that is not:

1. Demanding, Directing, Ordering, Commanding
2. Threatening, Warning, Admonishing
3. Ridiculing, Name-Calling, Shaming
4. Blaming, Judging, Criticizing
5. Moralizing, Preaching, Exhorting
6. Probing, Interrogating, Questioning
7. Teaching, Lecturing, Instructing
8. Giving Solution or Answers or Advice
9. Analyzing, Diagnosing, Interpreting

I - You (Second Person)

"I" statements suggest that I make statements that relate only to me and my feelings. The focus is on the facts (feelings) and not our interpretations or opinions about how the other person relates to the feelings.

"I feel happy, mad, sad, etc.", instead of "You make me feel guilty." The aim is to express my feelings and the thinking based on these feelings. That leaves it in first person singular. But, opinions involving the other person (such as blaming, judging, demanding, analyzing, etc.) do not foster good communication.

Examples are:

Blaming-Judging-Absolutistic Statements		"I" Statements
"You make me angry." (Blaming)	(rather than)	"I feel angry"
"You are a very likeable person." (Absolutistic)	(rather than)	"I like you"
"You are a mean boy." (Judging)	(rather than)	"I feel hurt when you do that."

I - We - It (Third Person)

Notice how often you and I use "we", "they", or even "other people", etc. "We in the group feel.....". Or, "Most of the persons in our apartment house think that.....", "Everybody here knows that.....". Notice how often you and I speak for other people. It is presumptuous to speak for others. How do we know what they really feel or think? Often use of "we" or "they" shows that the person speaking is being possessive or protective. He is not letting the other person talk for himself. All I really know for sure is what I feel and think.

Hiding Behind the "It"

There is a difference between saying:

"The cup slipped out of my hand."	(Instead of)	"I dropped the cup."
"My hand slipped."	(Instead of)	"I gave him a slap."
"I have such a bad memory."	(Instead of)	"I forgot." (or better) "I did not want to remember."

Not only do we blame others, but we also tend to shift responsibility for our mistakes to Fate, Circumstances or Illness. F. Perls calls this "hinding behind" and "It". "It" language is a mild form of projection; and, like any other kind of projection, this projection results in a change from active into a passive attitude. It moves us from taking responsibility for ourselves into fatalism.

Strengths of "I" Statements

"I" statements don't provide resistance or rebellion. They do not contain evaluation or put-down other persons.

"I" statements suggest that the responsibility for feelings are owned by the feeling party.

"I" statements do not lead to mutual name calling or reciprocal blaming.

"I" statements ask that I be honest and genuine with my feelings. I am being asked to drop all masks, facades, games, and "tell it like it is."

III. Behavioral Objectives

1. To be able to recognize when others are using second and third person statements, and to assess the impact of these statements on their communication with others.
2. To be able to use "I" statements that a) do not blame, judge, demand, or ask questions, and that b) contain both feelings (needs) and thoughts.

IV. Practice of Skill

1. Observe the use of "You" and "It" language in others.

2. Then be aware of it in yourself as well. Just observe it at first. Don't make a quick change until you have observed the feelings behind the avoidance of responsibility - shame, embarrassment, guilt, self-consciousness.

3. Try yourself writing and specify with a capital "I". Notice how you shrink from using it because you may appear "selfish", "bigheaded", etc.

4. It is advisable to ask questions only when further information is needed. Asking questions can be a way of putting the responsibility on others when it properly belongs to you. Try turning questions you may want to ask into positive statements.

Skill #2 - Sending "I" Statements (Exercise #2)

SITUATION	"YOU MESSAGE"	"I" MESSAGE
1. Mother trying to do Sunday School lesson. Child keeps getting on lap. Mother irritated.	"You shouldn't interrupt someone when she is studying."	
2. Seventeen year old boy brings car home to father after backing the rear fender into a lamp pole.	"You're not being a responsible adult. That's something a child might do."	
3. Wife keeps calling husband for dinner. He is at t.v. the food is getting cold and wife wants to get through so she can get ready to go out.	"You have been called three times. You're just trying to annoy me and ignore me. How can you be so inconsiderate?"	
4. Wife forgets to show up for lunch appointment with husband. They were going to price new den furniture. Husband is in hurry to get back to work.	"You should be ashamed. After all, I agreed to take time away from office and then you are careless about the time."	
5. Your head waitress in lunch counter you own has been sulling acting sad all day. Customers are affected, but you don't know why.	"Come on now, stop your sulling. Either brighten up or take the rest of the day off. Looks like you are taking something too seriously."	

COMMUNICATION SKILLS TRAINING IN GUIDANCE
AND COUNSELOR EDUCATION

SKILL #2 "I" STATEMENTS

Outline of Training in "I" Statements

COGNITIVE INPUT (about 20 minutes)

1. Explain Communication Model - its two parts and focus on concept of taking responsibility for feelings, behavior, thoughts.
2. Demonstrate difference between:
   a. "I am angry", and "You make me angry".
   b. "I need a quiet time"and "stop talking".
   c. Third person and IT statements.

DEMONSTRATION (about 20 minutes)

1. Set up a triad with one person acting as evaluator and other two making conversation. Suggest "negative or positive aspect of your job" if selecting a topic is a problem. Demonstrate this for about six minutes.
2. Ask for questions or comments from class.

PRACTICE (about ½ hour)

1. Break group into triads with one member of each group acting as evaluator. Rotate evaluator in each group about every 6 to 7 minutes.
2. Video tape each triad for about 6 to 7 minutes.
3. Ask for General Group reports while Video Tape is being rerun.

PROCESS (about 45 minutes)

1. Play back each triad and ask class to stop tape at any time or critque at end of each triad. Leader gives his feedback and observation.
2. Ask for other questions or comments.
3. Distribute handout material.

Entire Training Session takes about two hours.

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April 15, 1973

SKILL #3

PRACTICING EMPATHY

I. Introduction

We have suggested (in Skill #2) that communication consists of at least two fundamental factors: 1) sending "I" statements, and 2) empathy. Each individual to be an effective communicator needs to (1) be able to express his surface and deeper feelings and thoughts (without evaluation, judgment, teaching, etc.), and (2) be able to "hear" the other person's deeper feelings and thoughts. By "hear", I don't mean just to let the other person's words and actions enter our head. Empathy or real "hearing" involves much more as we shall see.

II. Description of Empathy

A. What is Empathy? Empathy involves respecting the other person's position (thoughts, values, feelings, etc.) by being able to convey to the other person that he is being received and understood. "Understanding" does not mean that you have to agree with the other person. It only signifies that you follow and respect his feelings, and accept his feelings as being valid for him. You are saying, in effect, that he has a right to hold views that are the same as yours or that are different than your own. Empathy means being willing to see the world from the other individual's perspective or frame of reference.

In its deeper sense, empathy involves the therapist's (or listener's) ability to allow himself to experience or merge with the experience of the patient (or speaker) and reflect upon this experience while suspending his own feelings and judgments and tolerating his own anxiety. It also means communicating this understanding to the patient (speaker).

Empathic listening does not merely mean to wait for a person to finish talking. Sometimes we are thinking of a reply to the speaker's position or defense for our own position while the other individual is talking. We often think how to respond to the other person instead of concentrating on what is underneath or behind the words or gestures used by the other individual. Empathic listening responds to the total meaning of what the other person is trying to say. Empathic listening implies no evaluation, no judgment, no agreement (or disagreement).

B. How Empathy is Shown (The Basic Rule) The concrete expression of empathy involves the paraphrasing or restating in our own words what the other person is thinking and feeling and has put into words. We must restate in our words the total meaning of the message, and obtain the other person's agreement that this was indeed his message. To say it another way, I may not present my view or position (or "I" statement) until the other person is satisfied that I received and fully comprehended what he meant to communicate.

This, then is the BASIC RULE:

> I may not give my "I" statement until I have received a "yes" from the other person indicating that he was satisfied that I heard him.
>
> OR
>
> Put in your own words what you thought he said before responding to him with your position.

Example:

Child says to parent, "I hate my teacher, she's very mean to me."

Parent's typical response, "That's ridiculous. You shouldn't talk that way, you know you don't mean it."

Reflection or Empathic Response, "It sounds like you are very angry with your teacher."

C. Advantages of Empathy. It is difficult to be empathic because if we allow ourselves to see the world through another's individual's eyes and fully understand his point of view, then we run the risk of changing ourselves and perhaps our own point of view. And, we all basically try to avoid change. Yet, it is primarily through emphathizing that we show our love for other persons.

Specifically, paraphrasing 1) shows the other person that he has been respected, 2) indicates that he has been heard by us, and 3) allows the listener to check the accuracy of his understanding and, 4) has a way of slowing down the communication so that more light than heat is generated.

III. Response Classification

E. H. Porter (in an Introduction to Therapeutic Counseling, p. 201) has suggested that here are basically five different ways of responding to messages sent by others. These five ways of responding are:

Evaluative A response which indicates the counselor has made a judgment of relative goodness, appropriateness, effectiveness, rightness. He has in some way implied what the client might or ought to do: grossly or subtly.

Interpretive A response which indicates the counselor's intent is to teach, to impart meaning to the client, to show him. He has in some way implied what the client might or ought to think: grossly or subtly.

Supportive A response which indicates the counselor's intent is to reassure, to reduce the client's intensity of feeling, to pacify. He has in some way implied that client need not feel as he does.

Probing A response which indicates the counselor's intent is to seek further information, provoke further discussion along a certain line, to query. He has in some way implied that the client ought or might profitably develop or discuss a point further.

Understanding A response which indicates the counselor's intent is to so respond as in effect to ask the client whether the counselor understands correctly what the client is "saying", how the client "feels" about it, how it "strikes" the client, how the client "sees" it.

The understanding response is the closest to our concept of empathy.

IV. Behavioral Objectives:

1. To be able to paraphrase verbal content.

2. To be able to both paraphrase verbal content, and reflect back feeling or experiencing states, without interjecting listener responses.

3. Using successfully the basic empathic rule in interpersonal communication.

V. Practice

1. Practice first just paraphrasing verbal content exactly.

2. Then, as you are able to gain accuracy restating verbal content, begin to restate in your own words both verbal content and accompanying affect.

3. Notice the "yes" or other indicator from speaker that lets you respond with your position.

4. Remember, your first response is not an "I" statement. Paraphrase first, then, state your position.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS TRAINING IN GUIDANCE AND COUNSELOR EDUCATION: EMPATHY TRAINING PROCEDURE*

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COGNITIVE INPUT - 15 minutes

One page handout on levels of client experience is distributed to the trainees, summarized, discussed, and questions answered. Objective is for each trainee to be able to state the six levels of a client experience.

DEMONSTRATION - 30 minutes

Trainer presents a brief, one minute, simulated client message and each trainee, in turn, is asked to respond to that message. Trainer provides immediate feedback to each trainee on the levels of message he responded to. Questions, discussion, comments, and feedback from the group are invited. Objective is for each trainee to identify in a live model the levels of client experience.

PRACTICE - 2 hours

The trainees are placed into triads and instructed to practice. Three roles are identified: empathizer, presenter, and observer. The empathizer (trainee) listens to the presenters message and attempts to respond with accurate empathy. The presenter talks about whatever he chooses, he may role play a client, discuss a personal concern, or talk about his present thoughts and feelings. The observer makes notes about the accuracy of empathy and gives feedback to the empathizer. Each empathizer listens for about five minutes, then feedback is given. Roles are changed, and a new empathizer practices and receives feedback, and roles are changed again so that each member of the triad has practiced empathy. Simultaneous with the triad practice, the trainer video tape records a brief segment (30 seconds to a minute) of each empathizer. This tape is replayed prior to each role change, and feedback by the trainer is given to each empathizer before the entire group. Comments and observations from the group are invited. Objective is for each trainee to respond accurately to one complex client message.

SUMMARY - 15 minutes

Questions are answered, discussion invited, and feelings are processed

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*Program presented at APGA Midwest Regional Convention, St. Louis, Missouri. April 18, 1973.

Bradley University
April, 1973

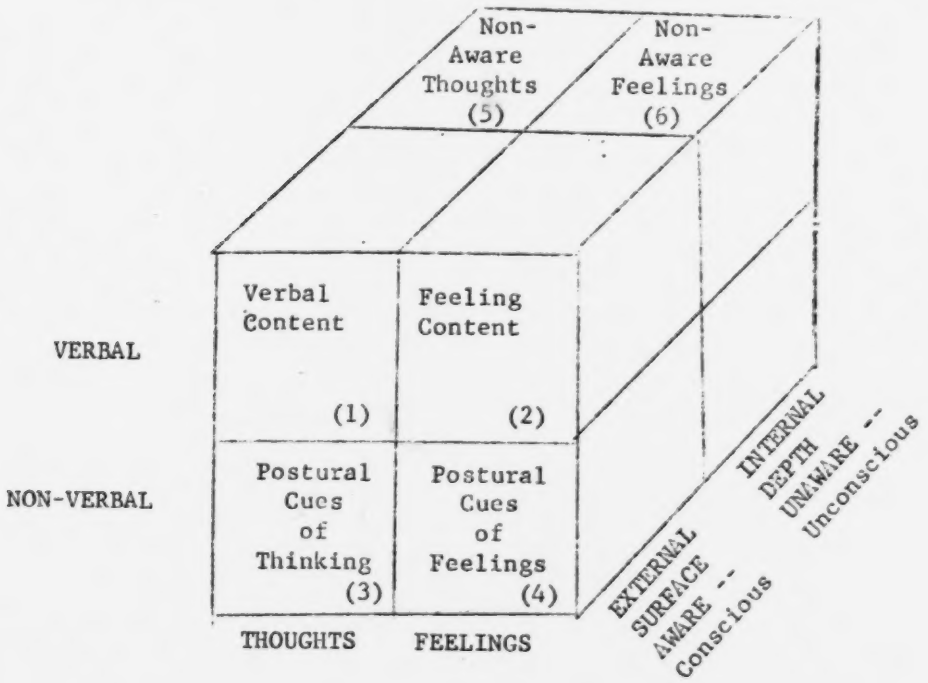
COGNITIVE INPUT
EMPATHY TRAINING

EMPATHY - Definition: (Greek em pathos = in suffering) Imaginative projection of one's own consciousness into another being.

EMPATHIC UNDERSTANDING - Definition: One of the three core conditions posited by Truax and Carkhuff as essential to the counseling process. (Empathy, Unconditional Positive Regard, Genuineness). Truax and Carkhuff developed an empathy scale to assess the degree of empathic understanding. They find two factors: (1) Response to the deep feelings to the client not just the surface feelings yet, within the range of understanding and acceptance of the client. (2) Accuracy of perception or diagnosis.

EMPATHY - Definition for counseling: Counselor is able to understand the internal frame of reference of an individual to a high degree of accurary. The counselor senses the clients private world "as if" it were his own, keeping track of the "as if." Counselor perceives the feelings and personal meanings of client "as if" he were, or were inside, the client.

DIAGRAM OF LEVELS OF CLIENT EXPERIENCE



When accurately empathizing, the counselor must accurately perceive the external message i.e. (1) verbal content, (2) verbal feeling content, (3) postural cues of thinking, (4) postural cues of feelings, and accurately interpret or diagnose the internal message i.e. (5) non-aware thoughts and (6) non-aware feelings.

The counselor in responding to this complex message may:

1. Paraphrase the thoughts.
2. Paraphrase the feeling statements.
3. Model or verbalize the non-verbal thinking cues.
4. Model or verbalize the non-verbal feeling cues.
5. Interpret depth thoughts.
6. Interpret depth feelings.